GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1622
ANSWERED ON:06.03.2000
TELEPHONE FACILITY IN RURAL AREAS
PRABHUNATH SINGH

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned ` Indian Telecom Scenario: An overview` appearing in the `Economics Times` dated February 10, 2000;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

(SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) & (c) This news paper report while quoting the targets set in the National Telecom Policy, 1994 has commented upon the recent steps taken to encourage competitive environment through new Telecom Policy, 1999, reorganization of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India and need to encourage the growth of IT based technology. It is true that the objective of telephone on demand envisaged in the National Telecom Policy, 1994 could not be met. It is clearly mentioned in the New Telecom Policy, 1999 that even while achieving more than the targeted growth of telephones during the 8th five year plan by Department of Telecom ., the development in the private sector was not adequate due to several factors. It is with a view to removing these Limitations that the New Telecom Policy, 1999 was brought in and it is expected that after it is fully implemented, the targets envisaged will be met.
A major thrust of the Govt. is to encourage the growth of I T based services including Internet Services, with these objectives in view a National Internet Backbone(NIB) is under installation and is expected to be commissioned shortly.For encouraging the growth of Internet, licenses for ISPs are being given freely. Already over 60 ISP licensees have started operation for providing Internet services.